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Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-sixth year

Identical letters dated 16 November 2011 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

We write to express our condemnation of and objection to a continuing series of unilateral and illegal measures that are being taken by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Less than 24 hours after the Quartet met again separately with Palestinian and Israeli delegations in an attempt to forge a way forward for the resumption of credible peace negotiations, Israel, the occupying Power, once again proves its staunch commitment to entrenching its illegitimate occupation, in blatant rejection of the international consensus and in defiance of its obligations under international law.

On Tuesday, 15 November 2011, the Israeli Ministry of Housing illegally offered 2,548 settlement units and land plots for sale and subsidized long-term rentals in illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, most of them in Occupied East Jerusalem. This is an illegal step that is yet another clear demonstration of the determined efforts of the occupying Power to further entrench its belligerent occupation of Palestine at the expense of peace and international credibility. In this regard, there can be no doubt that the increased rate of illegal settlement construction in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in and around East Jerusalem, is in large part due to the international community's failure to hold Israel accountable for its violations and grave breaches over many decades.

The most recent illegal settlement tenders have been announced in the midst of Israel's systematic efforts to cleanse Occupied East Jerusalem of its indigenous Palestinian population, thus altering its demographic composition and cultural character. A case in point is Ammar Badriah, a Jerusalemite, who was recently stripped of his residency rights in his city, as were his wife and three daughters: Wafa (13), Qamar (8) and Iyan (4). Aside from denying Ammar his basic right to reside in the city, the occupying Power is also forcing him to pay approximately $300,000 in retroactive fines. Such an illegal, inhumane measure is intended to

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financially ruin this family while also banning it from its centre of life, a fate suffered by thousands of Palestinian families who have been displaced and dispossessed by Israel's illegal policies vis-à-vis the Palestinian inhabitants of Occupied East Jerusalem.

In this connection, we must draw attention to the fact that Israel's illegal policy of home demolition is also intensifying. On Tuesday, 15 November 2011, Israeli forces demolished four homes in Al-Diyouk Al-Tihta area, west of the city of Jericho, and banned the families from returning to the area to collect their belongings. The occupying Power has also announced plans to demolish another 30 homes in this area. Such demolitions are part of Israel's decades-old policy to empty the Jordan Valley and other areas of the West Bank of its Palestinian residents. In fact, this policy was recently reviewed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In August 2011, the Office warned that "in the absence of concrete policy changes ... some of these communities may disintegrate and disappear altogether over the course of the next generation, or sooner". It also warned: "This possibility, along with the other patterns of Palestinian displacement and Israeli settlement activity in Area C, gives rise to concerns over demographic shifts and changes to the ethnic make-up of the West Bank".

In addition to these illegal and destructive policies, the occupying Power continues its practice of actively denying the most basic human rights of the Palestinian civilian population under its occupation. The range of such malicious policies is wide and the impact is severe on all human rights and affects all segments of the population. In this regard, in addition to continuing its inhumane blockade of the Gaza Strip, in collective punishment of the entire civilian population, Israel continues to launch military attacks against the Gaza Strip, with abject disregard for human life and the safety of civilians in this densely populated territory. In a recent Israeli air strike, one person was killed and the head of the Gaza consular branch of the French General Consulate and his 13-year-old daughter were seriously injured inside their home, and his wife suffered a miscarriage following the attack. We must call the international community's attention to the continuing threats by Israel in this regard, including by the chief of the Israeli army, who recently declared that the occupying forces "will have to take significant aggressive action in the Gaza Strip". We call for all efforts to bring to an end this Israeli blockade and violence against the Palestinian people.

Today, we also condemn Israel's rejection of an official Palestinian request to transfer the former political prisoner Amal Jumaa (41) to Jordan for urgently needed medical treatment. Amal was one of the women prisoners freed in the prisoner exchange of October 2011. During her years in imprisonment, Amal suffered from grave medical negligence that caused chronic illnesses that require immediate medical attention. Clearly, the ban on this woman's basic right to access adequate health care is in flagrant violation of international law and Israel's obligations as an occupying Power.

In addition to the aforementioned illegal actions, Israel, the occupying Power, has renewed its decision to continue robbing the Palestinian people of their tax revenues, as reflected in the recent announcement to continue withholding Palestine's November tax revenues. We condemn this action as an outrageous act of piracy and political extortion of the Palestinian people and their leadership. This is

Palestinian money that Israel is obliged to transfer to the Palestinian Authority in accordance with signed agreements. In this connection, we reiterate our call on the international community to ensure that this seizure of Palestinian revenues is ended without preconditions.

We conclude our letter by expressing our grave concern about and absolute rejection of the continued Israeli campaign of incitement against the Palestinian leadership, particularly President Mahmoud Abbas. Most recently, the Israeli Finance Minister likened the legitimate and multilateral Palestinian efforts to secure the Palestinian people's natural and historic right to statehood and self-determination to "terror attacks". The Minister, who also described President Abbas as "dangerous" and called him an "enemy", also announced: "It's not enough to halt the funds; we need to take additional [punitive] measures." Such incitement, which constitutes a serious threat to the President's life and is raising tensions between the two sides, cannot continue to be tolerated. In this regard, the Palestinian leadership holds Israel, the occupying Power, fully responsible for this reckless and hostile campaign.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 410 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 2 November 2011 (A/ES-10/538-S/2011/680) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations

United Nations A/ES-10/540–S/2011/761

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Security Council

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8 December 2011

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Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-sixth year

Identical letters dated 7 December 2011 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write to you today to convey the alarm of the Palestinian people and their leadership regarding the continuous hostile, aggressive and illegal settlement campaign being carried out by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The destructive impact of Israel's illegal settlement activities on the situation on the ground, on the prospects for peace negotiations between the two sides and on the viability of the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders cannot be overstated.

In the period since our last letter to you, we have witnessed the flagrant continuation of this illegal Israeli colonization scheme, in addition to innumerable other illegal policies and practices, as the Israeli Government continues to flaunt its impunity before the eyes of the international community. The continued impotence of the international community, including the Security Council, to hold Israel accountable seems clearly to only invigorate this lawless campaign as Israeli officials, including the Prime Minister, compete to outdo one another as to who is the more fervent supporter of the settlements and the lawless, extremist settlers who have been transferred to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, to inhabit those illegal settlements and to terrorize the Palestinian civilian population as part of the occupying Power's efforts to entrench its occupation and control the land, devoid of the indigenous Palestinian people, whom it seeks to forcibly displace, or rather ethnically cleanse, via the vast network of illegal policies and practices it inflicts upon them.

In addition to the series of announcements last month regarding the plans to construct thousands of new settlement units, particularly in areas in and around Occupied East Jerusalem, the occupying Power has announced plans to construct yet another 119 units in the illegal settlement of "Shilo" north of Occupied East Jerusalem. The Israeli Defense Ministry itself approved these plans to expand this

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settlement deep into the West Bank by more than 60 per cent. Israel has also continued to forcibly confiscate Palestinian land, including 1,500 dunums (375 acres) of land in an area north-east of the Jordan Valley for the expansion of the illegal annexation Wall and of several illegal so-called "settlement outposts" nearby. Also, on 1 December, Israel began the construction of a new road intended to link the illegal Israeli settlements in Occupied East Jerusalem. Of course, this road, like so many other similar roads constructed by the occupying Power as part of the apartheid system imposed on the Palestinian people under its occupation, is intended to serve as an Israeli-only road and will also further sever the Holy City from the rest of its natural Palestinian environs.

In grave contravention of international humanitarian law, the Israeli demolition of Palestinian homes and properties and the eviction of Palestinian families, including children and elderly persons, have also continued throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Recent examples of this illegal, inhumane policy include the destruction of a manufacturing facility for stone-cutting in the area of the city of Qalqilya. That facility was the source of income for eight Palestinian families, whose livelihood has now been destroyed. Also, this past Monday, 5 December, the occupying Power destroyed a Palestinian home in the Silwan neighbourhood of Occupied East Jerusalem, leaving at least 15 Palestinians homeless, including a two-week-old baby. The traumatized Burqan family, to whom the home belonged, was not even allowed to retrieve furniture and personal belongings from the home before it was demolished. That same day, Israeli bulldozers destroyed another Palestinian structure in Beit Hanina. Also, violating the prohibition of the forced transfer of civilians, Israel has ordered the deportation of yet another Palestinian, Ahmad Attoun, from his native city of Jerusalem, following the revocation of his residency permit and his seizure after a year of sheltering in an International Committee of the Red Cross building in the City.

At the same time, the Israeli settlers continue their rampage of terror and violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Recent incidents include the shocking abduction, on 5 December, of a Palestinian shepherd, Salim Shehadeh, age 60, by extremist settlers from the illegal "Yitzhar" settlement in the area of Nablus. Those settlers also stole the shepherd's flock of 50 sheep. Just a few days earlier, on 3 December, several settlers from the illegal "Itamar" settlement attacked and beat another 60-year-old Palestinian man. Then, on 4 December, a group of Israeli settlers set fire to Palestinian agricultural land in the northern West Bank, destroying at least 5 dunums of cultivated land. That attack was perpetrated after the arrest by Israeli police of seven female settlers for so-called "price tag" attacks against Palestinian civilians. Today, 7 December, anti-Arab graffiti was found scrawled on the walls of yet another mosque, this time in the village of Burqin near the city of Nablus, and the mosque was also targeted for arson, as burning tyres were rolled towards its entrance.

Regrettably, Israeli escalation and provocations also continue with illegal Israeli actions against the defenceless Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip. In addition to the continuation of its unjust and illegal blockade of Gaza, which is being imposed in collective punishment of the entire population and which continues to gravely affect all aspects of life there, the occupying Power continues its military attacks targeting the area. Today, one Palestinian man was killed and at least two other civilians were wounded as a result of an Israeli air strike. Moreover,

the Chief of Staff of the Israeli military has warned that Israel is prepared to launch a major operation against the Gaza Strip.

Such flagrant threats and provocations by Israel, along with its reckless pursuit of so many illegal policies and practices, especially its rabid settlement campaign throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, are the cause of the continuous decline of the situation on the ground and are inflaming sensitivities and tensions between the sides. The failure to bring a halt to these illegal and destructive Israeli actions threatens to seriously destabilize the already fragile situation with dire consequences, including with regard to the prospects for the realization of the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders. The Palestinian leadership thus renews its calls on the international community, and particularly the Security Council, to uphold the rule of law, to uphold the relevant United Nations resolutions and to uphold their duties under the Charter of the United Nations and to act with urgency to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to cease all of these illegal policies and to abide immediately by its obligations under international law, including humanitarian and human rights law. Should Israel continue to fail to comply and continue to blatantly defy the international community, serious collective action should be undertaken to hold Israel accountable for all of its violations. We are convinced that only such direct and principled action by the international community, including the Security Council, can actually bring an end to Israel's impunity and salvage the two-State solution.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 411 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 16 November 2011 (A/ES-10/539-S/2011/724), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Feda **Abdelhady-Nasser**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-sixth year

Identical letters dated 8 December 2011 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

This is our second letter to you in the past 24 hours, aimed at drawing attention to the illegal and provocative actions being taken by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Israel's military aggression and colonization and its continuous provocations and incitement against the Palestinian people are heightening tensions on the ground, threatening to seriously destabilize the situation. This requires urgent redress by the international community, which must act to implement the rule of law and bring a halt to the gross violations being perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinian people. The prospects for peace are contingent on such collective legal, political and moral action, including by the Security Council.

In yet another condemnable display of defiance, yesterday the Israeli Government announced an additional 14 more settlement units to be built in Occupied East Jerusalem in the Palestinian neighbourhood of Ras Al-Amud, as well as the seizure of 150 dunums of Palestinian agricultural lands in the town of Khadir, south of Bethlehem. The occupying Power also issued demolition orders for 14 Palestinian homes in the village of Susiya in southern Al-Khalil (Hebron). Moreover, it has been reported that this week the occupying Power will complete the construction of the Wall around the Shufaat refugee camp in Occupied East Jerusalem. The completion of this illegal Wall will totally isolate and entrap the 45,000 refugees in the camp, who will only be allowed to enter or exit the camp through one checkpoint, forced to go through it even to access the rest of their own City. We must thus reiterate: the destructive impact of Israel's illegal settlement campaign in all its manifestations is massive, on the ground, on the prospects for credible peace negotiations, and on the viability of the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders.

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Unquestionably, Israel's illegal colonization of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, is gravely impairing the contiguity, the integrity and the viability of the Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The impact on Occupied East Jerusalem as a result of policies and measures specifically targeting the City is most intense. In addition to home demolitions, evictions and illegal excavations of religious sites in the Holy City, the occupying Power has "ordered" the closure within a week of a wooden access ramp to the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, the third holiest site in Islam. In this regard, it should be noted that Al-Magharbah Gate is one of the main entrances to Al-Aqsa Mosque and that it is the responsibility of the Islamic Waqf to restore the ramp as is needed. This latest Israeli decision can be seen only as an attempt to further entrench control over and alter the character and identity of Occupied East Jerusalem, in clear violation of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, including those adopted by the Security Council.

In addition to the above, over the past 24 hours, Israeli settlers have continued their rampage of terror in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In the West Bank town of Nablus, Israeli settlers fired at Palestinian shepherds near Yanun village, and in Asira Al-Qibliya settlers surrounded a house, stoned and vandalized it, smashing its windows, and threw paint on its walls. It must be recalled that Israel's illegal settlement drive and the settlers are funded, protected and armed by the Israeli Government, which has transferred and enabled them to live in these illegal settlements in grave breach of international law, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention, and which allows them to commit such crimes against defenceless Palestinians with absolute impunity. The lawlessness of the settlers, including deadly violence, terror, harassment and intimidation against Palestinian civilians and their properties, is facilitated, aided and abetted by the occupying Power, which bears full responsibility for the settlers' illegal presence and all of their illegal actions.

At the same time, for the second day in a row, the occupying Power continued its military assaults against the Gaza Strip, killing, injuring and spreading fear among the 1.5 million civilians living there. Today, an Israeli airstrike on a car near a crowded park in downtown Gaza City killed two Palestinians, one of whom was nearly decapitated and the others whose body was dismembered. In addition to the trauma caused to those who witnessed this barbaric attack, five bystanders were injured as a result, some seriously.

The international community has a direct legal and moral responsibility to ensure the protection of the Palestinian civilian population under Israel's occupation and to ensure that all parties adhere to their responsibilities in the Charter and as outlined in relevant United Nations resolutions. The Security Council in specific must uphold its duties in this regard and take serious action to hold Israel accountable for all of its violations. We thus reiterate our call upon the international community to give due attention to the grave situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to ensure that timely measures and action be undertaken to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to halt completely all its illegal and aggressive policies against the Palestinian people and their land, including settlement expansion and settler violence, extrajudicial executions, excessive and lethal force against Palestinians and home demolitions, and to finally commit to the pursuit of peace, if we are to have any chance to salvage the two-State solution.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 412 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 7 December 2011 (A/ES-10/540-S/2011/761) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Feda Abdelhady **Nasser**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

United Nations

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Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-sixth year

Identical letters dated 12 December 2011 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I regret to inform you that Israel is escalating its military assaults and human rights violations against the Palestinian people. In the past several days, air strikes and excessive force by the occupying Power have caused death and injury to more Palestinian civilians, including children. Along with the incessant escalation of Israel's colonization campaign and the terror wrought by Israeli settlers throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, these crimes are further traumatizing the Palestinian population and causing the rapid rise of tensions and instability on the ground.

On Friday, 9 December 2011, such brute force caused 14 casualties in one family, whose home was hit by a missile launched by Israeli warplanes into a civilian area in north-west Gaza City. This military attack caused the collapse of the Za'alan family home, killing the father, 38-year-old Bahjat Za'alan, and his 10-year-old son, Ramadan Za'alan, and injuring 12 other members of the family, many severely, including 6 other innocent children. Indeed, the wounds sustained by 10-year-old Ramadan Za'alan, which led to his death later that day, reflect the lethal impact of Israeli weaponry used against the defenceless Palestinian civilian population.

On the same day, the Israeli occupying forces killed yet another Palestinian civilian in the West Bank. Every Friday, Palestinians across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, gather alongside Israeli and international peace activists to protest Israel's illegal construction of the annexation Wall on confiscated Palestinian land, and these peaceful protesters are typically subjected to excessive force by the occupying army, resulting in numerous casualties, including the death and maiming of several people. On Friday, 9 December, in the village of Nabi Saleh, north of Ramallah, occupying forces fired tear gas canisters at protesters at close range, striking Mustafa Tamimi, age 28, in the head. The other protesters witnessed the impact of the metal canister blowing off

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half of Tamimi's face while Israeli soldiers looking on just laughed, reflecting the callousness of the occupying forces and their absolute disregard for and belittling of human life when it comes to the Palestinian people.

Tragically, Tamimi died of wounds on Saturday, 10 December, coinciding with the day that the international community pays tribute to human rights defenders worldwide in commemoration of the sixty-third anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Tamimi is the twentieth person to be killed by Israel in such peaceful demonstrations since 2002. Further adding to this tragedy, mourners at his funeral were also struck with tear gas canisters by the occupying forces, and six were arrested, including four Israelis and two international activists.

In yet another incident indicative of Israel's daily brutality, a 37-year-old Palestinian taxi driver, Haitham Ibrahim Kabha, was stopped on Saturday, 10 December, at a checkpoint on a road to Jenin and was forcibly removed from his vehicle and beaten by the occupying forces, who caused a fracture in his back and severe head and neck injuries. According to one witness, soldiers beat Kabha repeatedly until he was rendered unconscious. An Israeli ambulance near the checkpoint did not stop to provide him with aid, while at the same time, the soldiers prevented a Palestinian ambulance from reaching him for at least half an hour, until they were pressured to allow access to it by protests at the checkpoint.

Excessive force was also on flagrant display by the occupying Power against Palestinian youth from the Shufaat refugee camp in Occupied East Jerusalem on Sunday, 11 December. Shufaat residents were protesting the construction of a new Israeli military checkpoint at the entrance of the camp, which is now completely surrounded by the Wall and which will leave the camp totally isolated from the rest of the City. Young people protesting against the Wall and the checkpoint, which will control all movement into and out of the camp, were responded to by the occupying forces with water cannons and other brutal measures. Also, earlier in the week, at least 300 Israeli soldiers in armoured vehicles and accompanied by bulldozers stormed the villages of Deir Ghassana and Beit Rima near Ramallah on 8 December, raiding homes and mosques.

At the same time, extremist Israeli settlers continue their terror campaign throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Overnight yesterday, hundreds of armed settlers from the illegal "Yitzhar" settlement raided the village of Asira al-Qibliya near Nablus, throwing rocks at Palestinian homes and smashing windows of homes and vehicles and attempting to burn other property, causing widespread fear among the villagers.

All of these illegal, violent and provocative actions by Israel, the occupying Power, and its illegal settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, are further demonstration of the brutality meted out daily by the occupying Power against the Palestinian people and the massive human rights violations it is committing against a civilian population that is entitled to protection under international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention, which is applicable to the Occupied Palestinian Territory in its entirety. The international community, including the Security Council, cannot remain silent or continue to only express regret or disappointment over Israel's violations. It is the responsibility of the international community to put an end to these crimes by the occupying Power, and this responsibility begins with holding Israel accountable under international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

Regrettably, the failure to hold Israel accountable is only further emboldening its impunity, as it continues to arrogantly and recklessly pursue its illegal policies, including its expansionist settlement campaign, which continues apace, especially in and around Occupied East Jerusalem, despite the clear legal prohibitions and resolutions and the global calls for a complete cessation of this unlawful campaign. Here, I am compelled to inform you that today it has been revealed that the Israeli Defence Minister, Ehud Barak, has approved the construction of another 40 new settlement units and a farm in the vicinity of Bethlehem. The plans for this illegal construction would be near the illegal settlement of "Efrat" and would result in the further expansion of the so-called "Etzion" settlement bloc, bringing it to the edges of Bethlehem and effectively cutting off the City, which is also surrounded by the Wall, from the rest of the southern West Bank.

Such incendiary and illegal actions by Israel, the occupying Power, are totally contradictory to the goal of the two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders and thus to the ongoing effort of the Quartet to revive the peace process for the achievement of this objective. We reiterate that Israel's illegal settlement activities, especially in and around Occupied East Jerusalem, are tearing apart the fabric of Palestinian society as they are destroying the contiguity, integrity and cohesion of the Palestinian Territory and the actual viability of the two-State solution. It is incumbent on the international community, particularly the Security Council, considering its duty under the Charter of the United Nations vis-à-vis international peace and security, to act forthwith to redress this grave matter that is making the realization of a peaceful, just and viable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict more elusive with each passing day.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 413 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 8 December 2011 (A/ES-10/541-S/2011/765), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable, and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations

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General Assembly
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Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-sixth year

Identical letters dated 19 December 2011 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write to you once again to place on record our serious concerns regarding the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which continues to rapidly deteriorate as a result of the illegal, provocative actions being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, and its lawless settlers. Destruction and trauma continue to be inflicted on the Palestinian civilian population as a result of the crimes being perpetrated against them as the occupying Power and its extremist settler militias continue to act with sheer violence and racism and total disregard for international law and for the human rights of the Palestinian people.

As reported recently by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), settler attacks against Palestinian civilians have increased this year by at least 50 per cent. These attacks, all committed under the watch of the Israeli occupying forces have also increased in maliciousness and intensity, targeting civilians, young and old, their properties and their livelihoods, and religious sites, including mosques and churches. Their illegal and violent actions have caused extensive destruction and are seriously inflaming tensions and religious sensitivities. Moreover, it is clear that such deplorable attacks are not isolated incidents but rather constitute a clear agenda by the settlers and their supporters within the Israeli Government and army to terrorize the Palestinian people and make their living conditions so unbearable, aimed at forcibly removing them from their land and further entrenching this illegitimate, belligerent foreign occupation.

In the past week alone, Israeli settlers have attacked at least three more mosques, burning and vandalizing them with disgraceful graffiti amounting to grave incitement. On Wednesday, 14 December 2011, extremist settlers set fire to a 13th century mosque, Okasha, in Jerusalem and spray-painted repulsive and hateful graffiti on the mosque walls regarding the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him) and also damaged pipes creating flooding in the building. The following day,

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15 December, Israeli settlers set fire to Al-Nour mosque in the village of Burqa near Ramallah and also desecrated its walls with incitement graffiti, including a declaration of "War". The village has also been targeted by the settlers in recent rampages in which numerous olive trees have been destroyed. Today, settlers attacked and vandalized the Sahaba mosque in the village of Bani Naim south of Al-Khalil, spraying anti-Muslim graffiti and pro-settler slogans all over the mosque's walls.

Also, on 13 December, Israeli settlers forcibly entered the Orthodox Church of St. John the Baptist, which is located in the Jordan Valley. The settlers attacked the church under the watch of the occupying forces, vandalized it and caused damage to its contents and to its doors and windows as well as to several crosses in the church. In this regard, it is becoming abundantly clear that extremist Israeli settlers are attempting, and being permitted, to fan the flames of religious conflict with such attacks on Palestinian houses of worship, whether Muslim or Christian.

Israeli settlers have also perpetrated several other crimes in the past days against Palestinian civilians and properties throughout the Occupied West Bank. Recent attacks have included an attack by settlers on olive groves in the village of Burin near Nablus, in which at least 15 olive trees were cut down; a raid by settlers on the village of Duma near Nablus, where they set fire to a car and water tanker and also attempted to set fire to a bus; and the torching of a car in the village of Yasuf and another in the village of Haris in the Salfit area. The most recent of such incidents has been an attack today on the village of Beiteen near Ramallah, where dozens of Israeli settlers raided the village at dawn and set fire five cars, completely destroying them, and also causing damage to nearby building fronts and windows. The Israeli occupying forces present at the scene did not arrest a single settler, only dispersing them after the attack.

Also, in Al-Khalil (Hebron), where hundreds of extremist and criminal Israeli settlers continue to torment and terrorize the more than 180,000 Palestinian civilians who live there, settlers attacked Palestinians in the centre of the city on Friday, 16 December, spitting on young Palestinians and beating others. As is typical, Israeli soldiers in the vicinity did nothing to protect the civilians from the settler attacks and used force against international activists in the area who had been attempting to film the violent attack, breaking their cameras and intimidating them.

The lawlessness and aggression of Israel's illegal settler population is of course inherently linked to the lawlessness of the occupying Power and its aggressive and destructive settlement campaign, aimed at colonizing the entire Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly East Jerusalem. While the Palestinian leadership and the rest of the international community continue to speak of and work for the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders, Israel continues to expand and entrench its settlements on a daily basis, greatly damaging and reducing the viability of the two-State solution. Declarations of settlement construction continue as do the demolition of Palestinian homes and the confiscation of Palestinian land.

Yesterday, 18 December, the Israeli Government published tenders for the construction of another 1,028 settlement units in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. As indicated in a statement by the Israeli Housing Ministry, 500 units will be built in the settlement of "Har Homa" in Jabal Abu Ghneim in Occupied East Jerusalem, 348 units in the settlement of "Betar Illit" west of Bethlehem, and 180 units in the

settlement of "Givat Ze'ev" between Occupied East Jerusalem and Ramallah. In parallel, members of the Israeli Knesset continue their attempts to "legalize" so-called settlement outposts built on Palestinian land. All of these provocations are taking place in the midst of vocal appeals by the international community for Israel to stop this illegal, aggressive settlement campaign and in the midst of the efforts of the Quartet to revive negotiations between the two sides towards realizing the two-State solution, denigrating both the calls and the efforts made in this regard and proving once again Israel's impunity and absolute disdain for international law and its obligations as Member State of the United Nations in accordance with the Charter and relevant resolutions.

The recent period has also witnessed the further Israeli demolition of Palestinian properties. Today, the occupying Power issued demolition notices to Palestinian families in villages north of the Jordan Valley declaring the intention to demolish several homes and barns. Also, on 13 December, the Israel occupying forces demolished four homes in Al-Makhrour area of Beit Jala, a predominantly Christian town near Bethlehem that is being suffocated by Israel's illegal settlement enterprise. The same day, the occupying forces handed notices to several Palestinian families prohibiting land reclamation in the area, claiming that the land is "Israeli property". The occupying Power has also announced plans to confiscate land belonging to the Cremisan vineyard in order to expand its illegal wall in the town of Beit Jala, which has been reduced to one third of its size since the Israeli occupation began in 1967. In this regard, it must be noted that the city of Bethlehem is now surrounded by 19 Israeli settlements as well as by the wall and a network of Israeli-only bypass roads.

Faced with this blatant escalation of Israeli violations and provocations, we call on the international community, particularly the Security Council, to act with conviction to send a clear signal to Israel, the occupying Power, that all of these illegal actions will not be tolerated and must be brought to a complete halt. Unequivocal demands must be made for Israel to halt and reverse its illegal settlement campaign and collective, serious measures must be taken to ensure accountability must be undertaken if Israel refuses to comply with the legal obligations incumbent upon it, including under the Fourth Geneva Convention. Barring this, we will surely only continue to witness the further deterioration of the situation on the ground, the failure of any and all efforts to restore confidence between the two sides and to revive the peace process, and the further destruction of the two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders, with grave consequences for our peoples and the region as a whole.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 414 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 12 December 2011 (A/ES-10/542-S/2011/768), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations